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210 arrested in Boulder as CIA seeks recruits

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BOULDER — Police arrested 210 people for demonstrating against the presence of CIA recruiters at the University of Colorado Monday during a passionate nine-hour protest that even afforded participants a break for lunch.

The Boulder district attorney's office will decide later this week whether it will prosecute any of those arrested.

By late Monday, 206 of the 210 arrested people had been released, pending possible summonses on a charge of interfering with university students, faculty or staff, a misdemeanor, a university spokeswoman said.

Four were taken to jail pending possible charges of obstructing a peace officer, resisting arrest and second-degree burglary, in addition to interfering. Two had been released on personal recognizance bonds, and two were still being held Monday night, a county jail spokesman said.

The demonstration had a taste of everything: last-minute negotiations, dissident rebel factions, allegations of police brutality, vocal counter-demonstrators and a shoving match involving Boulder County Sheriff Brad Leach.

WHEN IT was over, interviews between 10 visiting CIA personnel and 93 job-seekers had been carried off smoothly, despite protesters' success in bringing almost everything else to a halt in Willard Hall, where the recruiters were.

An estimated 69 police, including officers on loan from the city of Boulder and the Boulder County Sheriff's Department, were on hand.

"It was interesting," said CU senior math major Dan Marvin, after pushing through a line of protesters to get to his morning interview.

"I actually agree with some of their (the protesters') views, but this is one of the few places where I can get a job in my field."

"Protest" organizers, Kevin Harris and

Meg Ruby had another in a series of negotiations with police as late as noon Monday, searching for ways they could attempt their citizen's arrests of the CIA in a nonviolent way.

Activists lined up on the east side of Willard Hall, stated their opposition to CIA intervention in Central America, crossed a police line, and were escorted onto a waiting bus to be transferred to the CU Events and Conference Center to be booked and released.

FIVE BUSLOADS of activists were carted away for processing, while about 50 jeering conservatives chanted "better dead than red," or sang the refrain from Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA."

Cooperation between protest leaders and police didn't sit well with some demonstrators who felt that the purpose of their action was being subverted in an attempt to play by the rules.

A group of about 10 protesters decided to try to crash through police lines. "We're not here to go on the bus. We're here to arrest the CIA," said Mark Fearer, one of the 10.

But Fearer and Michelle Keranen, both of Boulder, were met by unyielding police officers, quickly handcuffed, then separated from other protesters.

Fearer engaged in a brief scuffle with Sheriff Leach as he tried to get off the police bus, and Leach later confronted Fearer behind the bus as Fearer was arrested for resisting arrest.

"You're not going to push anybody around on the bus, pal," Leach shouted, pointing a finger in Fearer's face.

Harris lashed out against Fearer and other rebels, who he said were in no way connected with his group, Community in Action.

"I think they are on an ego trip," said Harris.

Earlier in the day, several protesters tried to evade police and reach the CIA by vaulting a 5-foot wall on the west side of Willard Hall.